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Committees
Economic Development, Small
Business and Regulatory Reform VC
Families and Human Services VC
Government Operations
Health Policy

The Jacobs Report

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GOVERNOR CREATES COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS

This week, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced that she has signed an Executive Order creating the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors. The council will serve as an advisory body to the Governor, offering advice and counsel on economic issues in the state.

"Michigan's economy depends on Michigan jobs," said Granholm. "By leveraging the joint power of the state's preeminent economic experts from academia, business, and government, Michigan can proactively plan to thrive in any economic storm."

The council will exist within the Department of Consumer and Industry Services (CIS) and will consist of 47 members appointed by the Governor. The director of the CIS, the chief executive officer of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the state treasurer, or their designees, will serve as ex officio, non-voting members of the council. The director of the Department of Consumer and Industry Services will serve as chairperson of the council.

"Tackling the economic issues we face today is a critical step in meeting the economic challenges we'll face tomorrow," said Granholm. "The creation of this council will ensure that the economic policy decisions of the state are built on the analysis of the greatest – and greatest array – of economic intelligence."

The members of the council may establish committees and request public participation on advisory panels as it deems necessary. Members will serve without compensation. The Executive Order is effective July 30, 2003. Specific members and the date of the first meeting will be announced in the fall.

LEGISLATURE TO EXAMINE CONTACT LENS PRESCRIPTIONS

Senate Bill 487, sponsored by Senator Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods), requires physicians (and optometrists) to release contact lens prescriptions to patients upon request, unless there is a compelling medical reason not to do so. "One of the most frustrating experiences for contact lens wearers is trying to get a copy of their prescription from the issuing doctor or optometrist," said Senator Jacobs. Many doctors, leery of losing the contact lens sale to a third party merchant, make it difficult for consumers to obtain their own prescription. Although prescriptions are the property of the patient, it is not unusual for the issuing party to give an impression to the contrary. "With the multitude of options now available for

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purchasing contacts, consumers should not have to jump through hoops simply for a copy of their prescription,” said Jacobs. The bill is currently in the Senate Committee on Health Policy. Hearings are tentatively planned for this fall.

THE DANGERS OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that foodborne pathogens cause 76 million cases of illness, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths in the United States each year. Michigan experienced 1303 reports of foodborne illness last year, affecting over 3000 people. However, this represents only a small fraction of total cases, since many people become ill without realizing that the cause is a foodborne pathogen.

America’s food supply is the safest in the world; however, things we eat are sometimes vehicles for potentially life-threatening illnesses. The primary causes of foodborne illness are bacteria, viruses, and parasites. They can exist in a wide range of foods—including meat, milk and other dairy products, spices, chocolate, seafood, and even water. Especially prone are unpasteurized fruit (and vegetable) juices and ciders; raw or undercooked eggs (or foods containing undercooked eggs); chicken, tuna, potato and macaroni salads; cream-filled pastries; and fresh produce. The Senate is currently working on legislation that would require “consume by” dates on some of these items.

There are many common-sense precautions you can take in your own home to eliminate some of the causes of foodborne illness. Always wash your hands with hot, soapy water before handling food. Use a meat thermometer to insure that foods (especially meats) reach a safe temperature. Thoroughly clean work surfaces after every use. There are a number of very helpful websites and consumer information phone numbers that provide additional information about preventing, identifying, and reporting foodborne illnesses.

USDA’s Meat and Poultry Hotline: 1-800-535-4555

FDA’s Food Safety Information Hotline: 1-888-SAFEFOOD (1-888-723-3366)

Reporting Foodborne Illness in Michigan: <http://www.rusick2.msu.edu>

Partnership for Food Safety Education: <http://www.fightbac.org>

FDA Consumer: Preventing Foodborne Illness: <HTtp://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fdunwelc.html>

MI Dept. of Agriculture Food Safety: <http://www.michigan.gov/mda>

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

This newsletter is produced in single-space form in order to save paper and transmission costs.

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